

**PROVIDENCE HOUSING AUTHORITY
BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS**

ANNUAL/REGULAR MEETING: Thursday, December 11, 2014; 5:00 p.m.

PHA Conference Room 100 Broad Street Providence, RI 02903

CALL TO ORDER

Chairman Nicolas Retsinas called the meeting to order at 5:03 p.m.

ROLL CALL

Present:

Nicolas Retsinas
Thomas Ryan
Dolores Cascella
Roger Giraud
Ricardo Patino
Hilary Silver
JT Taylor
Dorothy Waters

Absent:

John Igliazzi
Kevin Jackson
Nicholas Narducci

Seven members were present constituting a quorum to conduct business. Commissioner Patino arrived at 5:08 p.m. bringing the attendance to eight.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

A motion was made by Commissioner Taylor seconded by Commissioner Waters to accept and approve the regular meeting minutes of 10/23/14. The minutes were approved with a unanimous voice vote.

RESIDENT'S COMMENTS

None

Chairman's Report

Chairman Retsinas thanked Commissioner Taylor for thinking of everyone with her yearly calendars. In addition, the Chairman thanked Commissioner Cascella for helping assemble the holiday luncheon at Dominica Manor. The Chairman noted the staff holiday party is December 19, and invited the Commissioners to attend.

EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR'S REPORT

Director Paul Tavares congratulated Allan Pacific with his promotion as Director of Facilities Management. Allan will be celebrating 28 years with the PHA in January.

The Director spoke of issues brought to his attention by Vice Chairman, Tom Ryan. First, the upcoming increase of National Grid and how it will affect the PHA. Last year we spent \$2.131million dollars in electricity. Fortunately, 74% of our electricity is purchased through a consortium, which goes out to competitive bid and we have a fixed fee good for another year. Any rate increase will not affect us on the 74%, however, the remaining 26%; we estimate the increase will cost us \$80,000.00. A bigger concern is with the Section 8 units where our tenants pay their utilities directly. We will be submitting a letter to National Grid, prior to the public comment period on December 16, voicing our concerns regarding the increase.

The Director commented on the status with the Institute for the Study of Practice and Non-Violence. The institute continues to work in our developments and in our neighborhoods working with victims and people who may cause problems, building confidence and trust in the community. They will report to us in a confidential manner without divulging names. Commissioner Taylor suggested that Mr. Gross meet with the Resident Advisory Board (RAB). Paul Tavares stated the he will schedule said meeting in the near future.

Lastly, Donna De La Rosa, Director of Section 8, and the Director met with the local HUD office regarding a particular Mod Rehab project whose vouchers are administered by the PHA. There are numerous issues occurring under the control of HUD which appear may lead to litigation. The PHA will continue to remain in contact with HUD, and HUD will take the lead in the event of any litigation.

Director Tavares stated he is in the final stages of fine-tuning the job description for the Deputy Director position. The position will be posted and advertised after the holidays, with the goal of filling the position within the first quarter of the coming year.

A meeting was held at Chad Brown regarding how the alumni association was going to work with the youth at the facility with a basketball league. The Director met with the association and the boys and girls club making sure that all the issues with compliance were addressed. Director Tavares was pleased to announce that PHA will provide the facilities, the boys club will provide the structure, and the alumni association will provide the volunteers including coaches.

Director Tavares commented we are attempting to engage the employees in positive programs that existed prior to the challenges at the PHA. We have reinstituted employee of the year and employee of the quarter whom will be presented at the January or February meeting. Lastly, the employees have put together gift baskets for the holiday party along with a raffle for the PCOC.

Commissioner Silver questioned the issues with crime. The Chairman and the Director commented that new officers were assigned to our developments as Sergeant Hull promised. The officers have gone door to door to introduce themselves making the residents aware of their presence in the community.

Director Tavares noted Commissioner Patino made him aware that RI Housing was upgrading their computers and there may be an opportunity for us to obtain those computers. He wrote a letter to Richard Godfrey hoping to get some computers, and much to our surprise, we were informed we would be acquiring 30 computers.

COMMITTEE REPORTS:

- Budget and Finance: (Comm. Giraud)
- Resident Services: (Comm. Silver)
- Capital Improvements: (Comm. Cascella)
- Executive Committee: (Chair Retsinas)

Budget & Finance: Commissioner Giraud stated the committee met and the focus continues to be on the audit, which is moving forward and productively. The auditors are schedule to be back in January and producing a report 3-4 weeks after their return. The numbers continue to be positive and show a small deficit. The trends are positive in the Section 8 program with no significant issues.

Resident Services: Commissioner Silver stated a grant was received for \$195,000 for the Family Self Sufficiency Program (FSS) in addition to a Seatbelt grant. We received numerous private sector donations including turkeys from Stop & Shop and gift cards from Food Too Good to Waste. Commissioner Silver wanted to highlight the Mayor-elect Elorza has showed interest in the youth police initiative. Chairman Retsinas noted the Mayor-elect asked to meet with the Chairman and the Director of which they will report to the board at the January meeting.

Commissioner Cascella commented the Brown University market is back at Dominica and she wanted to recognize Special Projects in helping to reinstate the program.

Capital Improvements: Commissioner Cascella reported the Intercom/camera and door buzzer systems were installed in most Managers offices for security reasons. Two spotlights were installed between 29 and 39 Chad Brown Street to increase the lighting in the area. Preliminary costs for repairs to the exterior basketball court at Chad Brown are approximately \$35,000 to \$40,000; this will be done during the spring. HUD Limited Quality Assessment Inspections have been performed at amps 2 and 3; results will be forthcoming. Edward Rowse Architects is in the process of providing the Authority with a preliminary cost for the automatic fire sprinkler system installation in the HighRises. Two temporary Union Hall Carpenters have been hired to help with carpentry repairs to the unusual large amount of Scattered Site and other unit vacancies.

Allan Pacific mentioned the preliminary report with figures for the sprinkler system would be available within the next few weeks.

RESOLUTIONS:

None

OLD BUSINESS

None

NEW BUSINESS

Chairman Retsinas requested the January 22 meeting move to a different date, the Board suggested January 29. Commissioner Taylor noted a correction to the schedule for Hartford Park. The Chairman asked for a motion with an amendment to the 2015 Board Meeting Schedule. A motion was made by Commissioner Patino with the correction Commissioner Taylor second the motion. The schedule was approved with a unanimous voice vote.

Chairman Retsinas asked Director Tavares to introduce Melissa Sanzaro, Director of Special Projects. Melissa gave a presentation on the preliminary plans for the 75th Anniversary of the PHA looking for feedback and/or recommendations from the board.

Chairman Retsinas stated the election of Chair and Vice Chair of the Housing Authority is to be voted on and asked the Executive Director to conduct the process. Director Tavares opened the floor for the nominations.

Nomination and Election of Officers

Commissioner Taylor nominated and Commissioner Silver seconded the nomination of Nicolas Retsinas for Chairman. No other nominations were made. The Executive Director called the roll, with the favorable vote of 7 Commissioners and Chairman Retsinas abstaining, he was re-elected Chairman of the Board.

Commissioner Cascella then nominated Thomas Ryan for Vice Chair, Seconded by Commissioner Waters. Commissioner Taylor nominated Roger Giraud as Vice Chair Commissioner Silver seconded the nomination. The Executive Director called the roll:

Dorothy Waters – Tom Ryan
Gilberta 'JT' Taylor – Roger Giraud
Hilary Silver – Roger Giraud
Ricardo Patino – Tom Ryan

Roger Giraud - Abstain
Dolores Cascella – Tom Ryan
Tom Ryan - Abstain
Nicolas Retsinas – Tom Ryan

The vote was 4-2 with two abstentions. Commissioner Tom Ryan was re-elected as Vice Chair.

ADJOURNMENT

There being no further business, Chairman Retsinas accepted a motion to adjourn from Commissioner Patino, seconded by Commissioner Cascella. Said motion passed with a unanimous voice vote.

The meeting adjourned at 5:54 p.m.

Minutes Submitted and Approved By:

Lisa Cancelliere
Recording Secretary

Paul J Tavares
Executive Director